

Message Text

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43

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 NSCE-00 EURE-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 CIAE-00

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O P 161600Z DEC 75

FM AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5876

INFO COMICEDEFOR

CINCLANT

CNO WASHDC

SECDEF WASHDC

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

USMISSION NATO PRIROITY

USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE 0452

UNCLAS REYKJAVIK 1467

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EFIS PFOR IC UK US UNSC

SUBJECT: ICELAND/UK DISPUTE: EDITORIAL SAYS ICELAND MUST BE ABLE
TO EXPECT US UNDERSTANDING AT UNSC

1. INDEPENDENCE PARTY DAILY MORGUNBLADID, WHICH CLOSELY REFLECTS
POSITION OF PRIME MINISTER, NOTED IN EDITORIAL TODAY THAT WHILE
SECURITY COUNCIL RESPONSE TO ICELAND'S PENDING APPEAL CANNOT BE
PREDICTED, "PARTICULAR ATTENTION WILL CENTER ON REACTION OF THE THREE
BIG POWERS, US, CHINA AND USSR, AND PARTICULARLY ON THE US." PAPER
CONTINUES, "WE HAVE SUCH CLOSE RELATIONS WITH THE US THAT WE MUST BE
ABLE TO EXPECT THAT OUR POSITION WILL ENJOY AMERICAN UNDERSTANDING,
ESPECIALLY SINCE WE ARE NOT SEEKING SUPPORT FROM THE US OR ANY
OTHER POWER FOR OUR 200-MILE EXTENSION, BUT RATHER WE ARE DEMANDING
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THAT A SMALL STATE, WHICH HAS BEEN THE UNDISPUTED VICTIM OF

AGGRESSION, GAIN ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF ITS POSITION." EDITORIAL IS QUOTED IN FULL, BELOW:

2. BEGIN QUOTE

THE DECISION BY THE GOVERNMENT TO COMPLAIN ABOUT THE INCIDENT OFF SEYDISFJORDUR TO THE SECURITY COUNCIL OF THE UNITED NATIONS MARKS A NEW CHAPTER IN OUR TERRITORIAL WATERS DISPUTE WITH THE BRITISH. THIS IS THE FIRST TIME THAT ICELAND HAS GONE SO FAR IN A DISPUTE WITH ANOTHER NATION AS TO COMPLAIN TO THE SECURITY COUNCIL, AND FOR THAT REASON THIS IS AN IMPORTANT EVENT. AS THIS IS WRITTEN, IT WAS EXPECTED THAT OUR COMPLAINT WOULD BE TAKEN UP IN THE SECURITY COUNCIL TODAY, BUT THIS IF OF COURSE SUBJECT TO CHANGE AS THE SECURITY COUNCIL HAS MANY OTHER THINGS TO DO.

IN OUR TERRITORIAL WATERS DISPUTE WITH THE BRITISH IN 1973, THE LEFTIST GOVERNMENT CONSIDERED COMPLAINING ABOUT THE AGGRESSION OF THE BRITISH TO THE UNITED NATIONS, AND OUR AMBASSADOR TO THE UNITED NATIONS HAD EXTENSIVE DISCUSSIONS WITH THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE NATIONS IN THE SECURITY COUNCIL AT THAT TIME. THE DECISION WAS AGAINST A COMPLAINT AT THAT TIME. NOW IT IS NOT A QUESTION OF COMPLAINING ABOUT THE AGGRESSION OF THE BRITISH INSIDE ICELANDIC FISHERY LIMITS TO THE SECURITY COUNCIL, RATHER THIS IS A SINGLE INCIDENT IN THIS COD-WAR THAT IS BEING COMPLAINED ABOUT, I.E. AN ATTACK BY THREE BRITISH TUGBOATS ON ICELANDIC COAST GUARD SHIPS IN INDISPUTABLE ICELANDIC TERRITORIAL WATERS. IT SEEMS THAT IT IS POSSIBLE TO PROVE WITH PHOTOGRAPHS TAKEN FROM THE AIR AND THE SHIPS THAT THE BRITISH WERE AT FAULT, AND THAT AN ATTACK WAS NOT MADE ON THEIR SHIPS AS THEY HAVE MAINTAINED, AND IT IS OF COURSE VERY IMPORTANT THAT SUCH EVIDENCE BE AT HAND.

IT IS EXPECTED TO BE CLEAR TODAY, IF THE MATTER IS TAKEN UP AT THE SECURITY COUNCIL, WHAT THE REACTION OF THE BRITISH WILL BE TOWARDS THIS COMPLAINT. IT IS POSSIBLE THAT THEY WILL CONSIDER IT IN THEIR INTEREST TO HAVE THE MATTER TAKEN UP ON A WIDER BASIS, I.E. TERRITORIAL WATERS DISPUTES BETWEEN NATIONS GENERALLY, AND THEN CLAIM AS THEIR DEFENSE THAT A 200-MILE FISHERY JURISDICTION HAS NOT BEEN AGREED ON AS INTERNATIONAL LAW. THIS REMAINS TO BE SEEN, BUT ICELAND MUST EMPHASIZE THAT THE COMPLAINT COVERS THIS ONE INCIDENT WHICH SHOWS SUCH UNBELIEVABLE IMPUDENCE ON BEHALF

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OF THE BRITISH THAT ICELAND CAN UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES TAKE SUCH FORCEFUL AGGRESSION SILENTLY. DISCUSSIONS ABOUT THIS MATTER IN THE SECURITY COUNCIL OF THE U.N. WILL RESULT IN OUR DISPUTE WITH THE BRITISH ABOUT TERRITORIAL WATERS REACHING A NEW STATE. IT REACHES A STAGE ON WHICH IT HAS NEVER BEEN DEALT WITH BEFORE, SINCE ATTENTION OF PEOPLE ALL OVER THE WORLD IS DIRECTED CLOSELY AT THOSE MATTERS TAKEN UP IN THE SECURITY COUNCIL, AND THEREFORE IT IS VERY IMPORTANT THAT THE MATTER BE PROPERLY HANDLED ON OUR BEHALF. SUCH

A COMPLAINT TO THE SECURITY COUNCIL REQUIRES A LOT OF PREPARATION AND IN THIS CONNECTION WE ARE WORSE OFF THAN THE BRITISH, BOTH BECAUSE WE HAVE NO EXPERIENCE WITH SUCH COMPLAINTS TO THE SECURITY COUNCIL, A LIMITED NUMBER OF PEOPLE TO PREPARE THE COMPLAINT, AND FINALLY THE BRITISH ARE ONE OF THE SO CALLED BIG POWERS, WITH A PERMANENT SEAT IN THE SECURITY COUNCIL WHERE THEY CAN EXERCISE THEIR VETO.

AT THIS STAGE OF THE MATTER IT IS OF COURSE IMPOSSIBLE TO PREDICT WHAT THE REACTION OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL WILL BE. PERMANENT SEATS THERE ARE HELD BY COUNTRIES WHICH HAVE MANY AND VARIED POINTS OF VIEW, BUT PARTICULAR ATTENTION WILL CENTER ON REACTION OF THE THREE BIG POWERS, THE UNITED STATES, CHINA AND USSR AND PARTICULARLY THE U.S. WE HAVE SUCH CLOSE RELATIONS WITH THE UNITED STATES THAT WE MUST BE ABLE TO EXPECT THAT OUR POSITION WILL ENJOY AMERICAN UNDERSTANDING, ESPECIALLY SINCE BY THIS COMPLAINT WE ARE NOT SEEKING SUPPORT FROM THE U.S. OR ANY OTHER POWERS, FOR OUR 200-MILE EXTENSION BUT RATHER WE ARE DEMANDING THAT A SMALL STATE WHICH INDISPUTABLY HAS BEEN THE VICTIM OF AGGRESSION GAIN ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF ITS POSITION. IN THE EYES OF ICELANDERS THE HANDLING AND RESULTS OF THIS MATTER WITH THE UNITED NATIONS MUST BE A KIND OF A TEST AS TO HOW MUCH A SMALL COUNTRY IS WORTH AGAINST A BIG POWER AT THE U.N., WHEN THE CAUSE OF A SMALL COUNTRY IS UNDISPUTABLE AS IT IS IN THIS CASE, AND IT WILL CERTAINLY BE INTERESTING FOR US IN ICELAND TO SEE WHAT THE REACTION OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL WILL BE. END QUOTE.
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